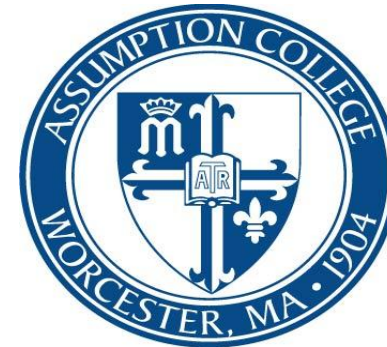


Assumption College



Assumption College Alma Mater

Lyrics: Beverly Shaw Johnson (1985)

Melody: *Christe Sanctorum* (Antiphonae, Paris, 1681)

Pledge we our loy - al - ty to As - sump - tion Col - lege,
Our hearts will al - ways be with As - sump - tion Col - lege.

Whose ded - i - ca - tion in pur - suit of know - ledge
Her ban - ners wav - ing with out - stand - ing cour - age

With - stands the test of time, aids us in our on - ward climb
Call for fi - del - i - ty, and pro - tect a spi - rit free.

In search of truth and light.
Long live the blue and white.

Faculty Quickguide To Academic Policies And Procedures

Revised 8/11

A publication of
The Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies
508 767-7486
026 Alumni Hall

Table of Contents

1. Teaching at Assumption
2. Designing the AC Syllabus
3. Who's In My Class: Rosters, Add/Drop, Withdrawals
4. MIA or AWOL? Attendance Policies
5. When You Can't Make It: Canceling Class
6. Student Struggling?
7. What if it's a Learning Disability?
8. But I Turned it in by E-Mail! Electronic Submission and Its Discontents
9. Liars and Cheats: Academic Honesty
10. When the Parent Calls YOU
11. Turning in Grades
12. Special for First Years: Mid-Semester Grade-to-Date Reports
13. But I Thought I Had an A! Grade Change Requests
14. Putting Materials on Reserve in the Library
15. A Few Helpful Resources

1. Teaching at Assumption

This *Faculty Quickguide* is meant to be a pragmatic resource for Assumption professors, a swift and efficient way to answer questions about how we do things here. But bureaucratic machinery ought to share in the ethos of an institution, ought to derive from its vision of itself, and ought to further its mission. For this reason, a quick look at the mission statement is in order.

Assumption College, rooted in the Catholic intellectual tradition, strives to form graduates known for critical intelligence, thoughtful citizenship, and compassionate service. We pursue these ambitious goals through a curriculum grounded in the liberal arts and extending to the domain of professional studies. Enlivened by the Catholic affirmation of the harmony of faith and reason, we aim, by the pursuit of truth, to transform the minds and hearts of students. Assumption favors diversity and ecumenically welcomes all who share its goals.

One: Assumption College is a teaching institution, and the teaching relationship between student and faculty is at the heart of what we are about. Our faculty create scholarship impressive for its quality, quantity, and creativity, and we see that scholarship further enriching and energizing what they do in the classroom. Our academic policies are meant to support and enrich the teaching relationship in every way possible, rather than to overshadow or intrude into it. We keep in mind at all times that the instructor of record (that is, you) is in charge of the students' experience. You have crafted the students' learning, and you will judge the degree of its success.

Two: Assumption College is a Catholic institution, and as such it thinks of itself as part of a Catholic mission to teach what is now called, in educational parlance, "the whole student," but which really simply means we teach values as well as disciplines. Questions about

right and wrong, ethical dilemmas, or religious belief are perfectly OK here. Feel free to follow a class into the realm of what is true, and good, and beautiful, in whatever way you can, or when the opportunity arises.

Three: Assumption College is ecumenical and Augustinian. It is catholic, not just Catholic, and as such it believes in academic freedom and open debate. In the tradition of Augustine, it holds that faith can withstand the rigors of the most critical reason, and emerge the stronger. In forming young people as whole adults, AC believes in shaping a strong, critical intelligence along with a caring heart and a moral sensibility.

2. Designing the AC Syllabus

In a minimalist perspective, a syllabus is the foundational legal agreement between you and your students. For this reason, students should receive a course syllabus on the first day of class, so they can make informed decisions about the suitability of the course in time to add or drop it. Add/drop week is the first week of classes. The add/drop window is always listed in the Academic Calendar on the registrar's webpage.

Syllabi take many forms, but they need to be clear and as unchanging as possible. Students deeply appreciate professors who keep to the syllabus both in what is assigned, and in when it is due. Changes in assignments, due dates, or grading criteria tend to make for confusion, misunderstanding, and bad feeling, and are best kept to a minimum.

Here is what a complete syllabus would have. These characteristics are based on a format approved by the AC Faculty Senate.

Your campus contact information: full name, title, office location, phone extension, Assumption College e-mail address. Whether or not you offer a home or cell phone is up to you, but if

you only offer campus contact information, be sure to check it frequently. We recommend that all e-mail communication be conducted through the AC e-mail system. Students are quick to say they sent an assignment or communication, and, when faculty have not received it, claim it was lost between their private and AC e-mail accounts. (All such claims can be checked in our system.) Clarify the class's means of communication in the syllabus, and underline it on the first day of class. Putting the course on Blackboard means the class can communicate as a unit.

Your office hours. We require six hours per week. Offering a variety of different times will permit all your students the opportunity to come. And of course, be there when you say you will be.

Full information on the course: Course designation, section number, times and places when meeting, number of credits it is worth. The Course Description, as it appears in the academic catalog, is where your students begin in their expectations of the class, so it might well form the first part of a richer, more extended description of what the course will accomplish.

Learning Objectives: what are the goals of the course? What will your students walk away with? Your assessment of performance (grading) ought to be guided by these.

Required books and materials, and where to get them. The cost of textbooks, always high, has risen in recent years, and is a growing concern for students and their families. Consider affordability when it is reasonable to do so, and look at rental or other options. Placing all materials on reserve in the library will ensure that all your students, even those who cannot afford to purchase the book, will have access.

Recommended Readings might also be listed in the syllabus, partly in an earnest effort to engage the more ambitious student, partly to convey that fields of study are vast and vastly interconnected.

Grading system. What are the assignments? What criteria will guide their assessment? How will each grade contribute to the final grade? Do you accept re-dos? Is there any extra credit?

Attendance Policy. We require that you have one, but you decide what it is. It would be perfectly reasonable for a conversational language class, or an art studio, or a performance-based course such as Chorale or Jazz Ensemble, to decline to allow a single absence that is not excused through the Dean's office. On the other hand, many professors allow one or two "freebies," and after that begin to discount grades for unexcused absences. Whatever your views, clarify and publish them to the class in the syllabus. Then stick with them. If a student has documented a serious illness or life crisis with the Dean's office, you will receive notices of excused absences from us. We make it clear to the student that, though they have been excused from the class, they have not been excused from the work, which they will need to make up in collaboration with you.

Policy on Academic Honesty. The blue-covered document will be distributed to you, and is further available in the Dean's office, the registrar's office, the library, the Academic Support Center, and all departmental offices. It is a good idea to go over the policy with your students early in the semester, particularly if you are teaching first year students.

Submission policy: how will students turn work in, and how will it be confirmed that they have done so? Is electronic submission allowed, and if so, through what means, Blackboard or e-mail? Will late work be accepted, and if it is, will it be discounted? If discounted, to what degree? (See "But I Turned It In!" below.)

Americans with Disabilities Act Statement. In order for us to be in compliance with this federal law, we must have an ADA statement in every syllabus. Here are some legally sound options, which you have our permission to lift verbatim.

"It is the policy of Assumption College to provide reasonable accommodations to students who have a documented disability. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Director of Disability Services for a confidential discussion of their individual need for academic accommodations."

"My highest priority is for our classroom and course work to facilitate participation and exchange. I am eager to make accommodations to guarantee to persons with disabilities access to class sessions, course materials, and the activities of the class. Let me know as soon as possible if you have a disability for which accommodations will be requested."

"Assumption College is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. If you have a documented disability (or think you may have a disability) and, as a result, need a reasonable accommodation to participate in class, complete course requirements, or benefit from the College's programs or services, then you should speak with me or contact the Director of Disability Services as soon as possible."

If students have documented a disability with our Director of Disabilities Services, Sharon de Klerk, they should give you a letter during the first week of class outlining what we have agreed in the way of accommodations. Any questions, please call Sharon at x7500. Her office is in the Academic Support Center on the second floor of the d'Alzon Library.

Plug for the Academic Support Center. This might read, "The Academic Support Center, located on the second floor of the d'Alzon Library, offers free peer and professional tutoring in all subject areas of the curriculum and writing, as well as workshops in time managements, study skills, and test taking. Call them at x7071 to make an appointment."

Semester Schedule. In order to manage their time effectively, students need to know as far in advance as possible when discussions on readings, quizzes, exams, and presentations will happen, and when

papers are due. A standard disclaimer such as, “This syllabus is subject to change” will permit flexibility, but some plan is needed. Be sure to indicate when and what the final will be. Our accreditors require us to require you to administer a final exam, final paper, or final project during the final examination period.

3. Who’s in My Class? Rosters, Add/Drop, Withdrawals

Your class rosters are posted on the portal. Using your username and password, access your Portal account from the AC homepage using the “my.assumption” link at the bottom of the page. Then, again at the bottom right, click on “Faculty Information” and “Rosters” in WebAdvisor. Tech issue? Call the Hub at x7060.

Rosters are fluid until after the end of the add/drop period, always the first week of classes. Students tweak their schedules for all kinds of reasons, and are fully free to do so (with their academic advisor’s approval) without financial or academic penalty until the end of add/drop. After add/drop, the die is cast, and students are committed.

You will want to pull a new roster at the end of add/drop. This is the final roster, and the one you’ll want to put in your grade book or on your grade spreadsheet. (It’s a good idea to wait to set up your grade recording system until your roster is finalized.)

After add/drop, no one may withdraw from a class without the professor’s (and their academic advisor’s) signature. No one simply goes away: if they are missing, let us know!

If one of your students misses two days in a row we ask that you let us know by submitting a **Poor Performance Notice**. This is now done through a WebAdvisor feature called Retention Alert, and the easiest way to do it is through your class roster.

How to report repeated absences from your class roster:

1. Access the portal through my.assumption on the home page
2. Scroll down to WebAdvisor, and choose “Faculty Information”
3. Choose “Class Roster,” the relevant class, and click on the student’s name
4. This will open up a “Student Profile” window, where you can, if you wish, learn the student’s home address, class, and academic advisor. Scroll to the foot of that window and choose “Add Retention Alert Info”
5. This opens a window called “Contribute Retention Info.” You must complete three fields: “Type of Issue,” “Summary,” and “Detailed Notes.”
6. “Type of Issue” offers a drop-down menu with two options: “Poor Performance Notice (To Student)” and “Other Concern (to Staff only)”. Choose “Poor Performance Notice,” put “Attendance” in “Summary” and tell us more in “Detailed Notes.” Please remember that your PPN goes directly to the student, copied to support staff and advisor. Click “submit” at the foot of the page. Also, avoid hitting the enter key while typing “Detailed Notes.” Doing so prematurely submits the message.

After add/drop, students may avoid a bad grade only by withdrawing from a course, or, in the case of sophomore, juniors, and seniors, taking it pass/no credit. The deadline for withdrawing or for taking a course pass/no credit is quite generous at AC, usually twelve weeks into the semester. So, two weeks or so before finals week, students may approach you about withdrawing from or taking your course pass/no credit.

Withdrawals and Pass/No Credit

Ideally, students don’t withdraw. One would hope that students have learned enough about the course in the first class meeting to make an

informed decision before the add/drop period is over, and to bail out, if necessary, then.

Withdrawing costs students and their parents money twice: the cost of the course at AC, and the cost of the replacement course. Withdrawing also slows degree progress. An AC bachelor's degree is eight semesters of 15 credits, for a total of 120. Any deviation from that structure must be made up with summer, intersession, or sixth courses, all an added expense.

On the other hand, withdrawal may be necessary to protect a student's grade point average.

The first rule of withdrawing is: students may not withdraw from a course if doing so changes their status from full to part time. Since full-time status is 12 credit hours per semester, and since most students carry 15 credit hours per semester, this means students may not withdraw from more than one course per semester.

If a student comes to you wishing to withdraw, and you sign the form, please understand that if this constitutes a second or subsequent withdrawal, the withdrawal will not be permitted by the registrar, and the student may still be in your class. Call the registrar at x7355 to confirm all withdrawals.

The second rule of withdrawing is: the choice to withdraw is the student's, and your role is to inform, not to advise. Students tend to hear what they want to hear, and if you speculate or encourage them to stay in, and they fail, they and their parents might claim you and the college mis-advised, or even promised a passing grade.

It is best to give students the clearest picture of their current status, all outstanding assignments, and to explain clearly just how much each is worth toward the final grade. Then emphasize: the choice is theirs, and you do not have a crystal ball

to consult to see how they would perform on the final elements of the course.

UNLESS. In the case of a student who will clearly and inevitably fail your course, urging the student to withdraw is the right thing to do. You can do so through the Retention Alert system, as described above.

Pass/No Credit

There is another option that permits a student to receive credit for a course without its grade affecting his or her cumulative grade point average. Pass/No Credit is a good option if 1) the student is a sophomore, junior, or senior with at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average, and 2) the course is an elective. Pass/no credit is not available to first years, or for General Education courses or courses in a major. Pass/no credit is intended to encourage adventurousness by reducing the risk of taking courses outside your academic strengths. If a C- or higher grade is earned, a pass is awarded and the credits are posted. If the grade is lower than a C-, "NC" is posted and no credit is awarded. In either case, no grade points are posted to the academic record.

4. MIA or AWOL? Attendance Policies

We require that you have a clearly stated attendance policy included in your syllabus, but it is up to you what it is. Studio art or conversational language classes might well decline to approve a single absence. Lecture courses might be more lenient. The policy is your call, but we ask that you craft one and make it clear in your syllabus.

Enforcing the policy is also your responsibility. The Dean's Office only processes absences of more than two full days. For a single missed class, it is between you and the student to determine what excuse will be accepted, and what documentation will be required by

you. Please do not refer students who claim minor illnesses, or minor reasons for a single absence, to the Dean's office.

There is only one instance in which your determination to excuse or decline to excuse an absence would be superceded: if a student has documented a serious illness or life crisis with the Dean's office, the Dean reserves the right to excuse that student from class. If you receive an absence notice from the Dean's office, be assured it has been documented, and is real. We remind students and faculty that the WORK is not excused, only attendance in class for the indicated day.

Attendance Policy for Student Athletes

It is important to say something about our attendance policy for student athletes. Academics come first at Assumption, and our coaches are expected to make that clear to their players. Given that, we nevertheless expect faculty to make every reasonable effort to be flexible with student athletes for GAMES or MATCHES only, not for practices.

Student athletes are expected to identify themselves as such at the outset of the semester -- you may confirm that they are indeed on the roster with the Dean -- and to work with faculty well in advance of classes they may need to miss.

Our policy places a limit on the number of classes that may be excused by you for athletic competitions: five CLASSES total, and no more than one week's worth of classes for any one COURSE, i.e. two absences for a T/R course, three for a MWF, etc.

Student Athlete Information

At Assumption, academics come first. But the value of being a member of one of our many intercollegiate teams is considerable, provided you can balance the demands of intercollegiate play with the rigors of your studies.

Student-athletes face special challenges. How will you find courses that work with your practice schedule? Will your absences be excused if you have to miss class because of a game? What grades do you need to maintain eligibility, and what happens if you lose eligibility? Here is some information to help you know the ropes.

Course Selection and Scheduling

Be sure your academic advisor knows that you are a student-athlete, and when you are in-season. Know when your team practices, so you can make informed decisions about course selection. See your advisor often, and register on time, meaning when the window for your class opens, so you will have the greatest chance of getting a seat in the classes that work for you.

Time management is crucial for student athletes. The *Assumption College Student Handbook* is also a Planner. Use it. Time management workshops and materials are available (free!) in the Academic Support Center on the second floor of the D'Alzon Library. Student athletes who stay organized and on top of their studies, thrive.

Missing Class Because of a Game

Student athletes are expected to attend all classes and labs, and to abide by the attendance policies set by their professors. Each professor remains in charge of his or her own class attendance policy. College attendance policies for student-athletes do not supersede each individual professor's attendance policy.

On the first day of class, tell your professors that you are on a team, and that you are in-season. It is up to *you* to work out any excused absences with your professors well in advance of any absences due to intercollegiate *competition* (again, not practices.) You should inform yourself of your game schedule ASAP, so you can work things out with your professors.

If your professor asks for it, the Dean of Undergraduate Studies will confirm that you are on the roster, and have a competition, but again, it

is up to **you** to request such confirmation from the Dean well in advance of the absence.

The maximum total number of excused absences a student can receive in a semester is five (5) classes, and for any one course, the absences cannot exceed one week's attendance: once for a course that meets only once a week, three for a course that meets three times a week, two for a Tuesday/Thursday.

Of course, any time you miss a class, even if it is excused, it is up to you to find out what you missed, and make up any missed work. Professors have the right to refuse to give you permission to miss a class should a test or quiz be scheduled at that time. So, speak with your professor early to avoid this issue coming up at the last minute.

NCAA Eligibility

If you want to play intercollegiate sports, you must register with the National Collegiate Athletics Association Initial Eligibility and Amateurism Clearinghouse no later than the summer prior to your freshman enrollment. Team members
Here is what we tell student athletes on our advising website and in the academic catalog and student handbook:

must abide by all NCAA and Assumption College rules on eligibility. In fact, the NCAA's policy is that a rule established by a member institution becomes an NCAA rule as well, for student athletes attending that college. Thus a College rule violation is also an NCAA violation.

At Assumption College you must maintain a 2.0 or a C average every semester to maintain NCAA eligibility for the following semester, and you cannot fall more than six credits (usually two courses) behind your graduating class. If you fall below a 2.0 in a semester, or fall more than six credits behind, you are ineligible and cannot practice or play a sport the following semester.

Any student-athlete who falls below at 2.0 for the semester is put on academic status, either probation or conditional enrollment, depending on the severity of the academic problem, and is given some kind of academic support.

Student-athletes on probation are **ineligible** to practice or play a sport. In some circumstance, with the successful completion of pre-approved intersession or summer coursework, a student-athlete **might** regain their athletic eligibility. Such a student would, however, remain on probation, and would be expected to participate in any academic support put in place by the Dean's office.

Students on conditional enrollment are in danger of being required to withdraw from the college. **Under no circumstances** are they allowed to practice or play a sport. Students on conditional enrollment might well benefit from intersession or summer coursework to rectify poor grades, but cannot regain eligibility regardless of what effect such coursework might have on their grade point average.

Finally, if a student is required to withdraw from the college, he or she must leave for at least one full semester. Should the Dean of Undergraduate Studies readmit that student to Assumption College, he or she would return on Conditional Enrollment and would be ineligible to practice or play a sport during the first semester in which they return.

Questions regarding athletic eligibility should be directed to Prof. Kevin Hickey, x 7296, khickey@assumption.edu.

5. When You Can't Make It: Canceling Class

If you are ill or otherwise unable to meet with your class, call your department secretary. The secretary will post your absence on our website and put up a note at the classroom door. Of course, you'll want to indicate to the class what ongoing work they need to be doing,

and, if you have had to cancel an exam or other important class event, when it will now occur.

6. Student Struggling?

If you have a student who is struggling, ask him or her to stay after class and then, privately, encourage a visit to your office hours to review materials and clarify assignments. Remind them of the Academic Support Center on the second floor of D'Alzon Library, where nationally-certified peer and experienced professional tutors can help them with nearly every subject we teach, as well as writing across the curriculum and all mathematics courses.

The ASC also offers workshops in time management, study skills, reading strategies, note taking, and test-taking strategies. If a student's need exceeds your time to meet it, urge them to make an appointment at the ASC at x7071. Allen Bruehl is the director of the Center.

If a student does poorly on an assignment, or has missed more than two classes in a row, or otherwise has you worried, please send the student a **Poor Performance Notice** through your roster. Copies also go to the student's academic advisor, the Academic Support Center, and the Dean.

To send a Poor Performance Notice:

1. Access the portal through my.assumption on the home page
2. Scroll down to WebAdvisor, and choose "Faculty Information"
3. Choose "Class Roster," the relevant class, and click on the student's name.
4. This will open up a "Student Profile" window, where you can, if you wish, learn the student's home address,

class, and academic advisor. Scroll to the foot of that window and choose "Add Retention Alert Info"

5. This opens a window called "Contribute Retention Info." You must complete three fields: "Type of Issue," "Summary," and "Detailed Notes."
6. "Type of Issue" offers a drop-down menu with two options: "Poor Performance Notice (To Student)" and "xOther Concern (to Staff only)". If your concern is an academic one, please choose "Poor Performance Notice," summarize your concern in "Summary" and fill in your text in "Detailed Notes." Please remember that your PPN goes directly to the student, copied to support staff and advisor. Click "submit" at the foot of the page. Also, avoid hitting the enter key while typing "Detailed Notes." Doing so prematurely submits the message.
7. "xOther Concern" is a way to report non-academic information to the dean and support staff, only. If a student seems troubled, or upset, or especially anxious or withdrawn, or not him or herself, this is a quick and confidential way to tell us about it.

Of course, we continue to welcome your calls and e-mails if you prefer that means of communication. Eloise is at x7487, eknowlton@assumption.edu, and Jenny is at x7007 jemorrison@assumption.edu.

Issues that would indicate the need to send a Poor Performance Notice:

Lack of attendance
Failure to participate in discussion
Unprepared or underprepared
Low quizzes
Failed quiz or exam
Poorly written papers
Poor lab performance

Please keep in mind if you choose PPN, the message is sent *to the student*, folded into a message from the Dean of Undergraduate Studies explaining its nature and intent. Clarity, an encouraging tone, and specific directions for improvement characterize an effective Poor Performance Notice. Expect to see someone you've sent a PPN in your office hours. If you don't, you should probably inquire why he or she hasn't followed up on the notice.

Student behaviors that would indicate the need to send an "Other Concern" Retention Alert message, or to prompt a call to a Dean:

Overt or indirect expressions of intent to harm self or others
Change in motivation or focus
Tearfulness or signs of excessive anxiety
Signs of anger or combativeness
Speaking out inappropriately in class
Alarming or disturbing content in writing or class discussion
Physical injuries such as bruises or cuts that seem self-inflicted
Significant change in weight recently
Deteriorated personal hygiene
Signs of alcoholism, student repeatedly hung over
Sleeping in class, tired, complaining of excessive fatigue

7. What if it's a Learning Disability?

Students with disabilities often do not disclose them when they come to college. They may want to lose the stigma of a disability, which can be harsh in high school, or they may have an unrealistic view of whether past accommodations have been necessary. "I did fine in high school; I don't need help," may be their view, while in fact the "doing well" may have been made possible by accommodations.

So, students don't always tell us, and we aren't allowed to ask. We hope they self-disclose, and we encourage them to do so. If they do, and if we have approved accommodations such as extra-time examinations (the most common accommodation) your students will bring you a letter from Sharon de Klerk, Director of Disability Services, outlining the accommodation.

But what about the ones who have not disclosed, who have not been accommodated, and who are in your class, struggling? If you have a student who

- seems to struggle specifically with examinations, or with reading, but who seems bright and engaged in discussion
- has trouble focusing, seems to drift away during class
- misinterprets directions
- complains of headaches or inability to hear or see
- makes inappropriate comments or misses social cues
- demonstrates generally poor comprehension and retention

there may be a disability. Call Sharon at x7500.

8. But I Turned It In! Electronic Submission and Its Discontents

One of the delightful ironies of a digital age is its ease of communication and the difficulties such ease can cause. Electronic submission is great: fast, complete, marked with date and time. But also ephemeral and vulnerable to technological error or the claim of such error.

Claiming submission in order to buy more time now has support on the internet. Corrupted-Files Dot Com (<http://www.corrupted-files.com/Home.html>) sells, well, corrupted files which faculty cannot open, but don't discover they cannot open for -- the student hopes --

several days, during which time the student writes a (better) paper. A bargain at \$4.95.

If you allow electronic submission, you will want to clarify a course-endorsed path of communication.

The Blackboard Classroom Management Space has a drop box for submitted work. If you use it, be sure that there is a means of recording when work came in, and that such receipt is recorded for the student. It is important to close down the possibility of students claiming they turned in work when they did not.

If you allow or require submission through e-mail, we recommend you use ONLY the AC e-mail system (that is, your AC e-mail address, and the student's AC e-mail address) and that you require all your students to use the "read receipt" feature, which will give them confirmation that you opened the e-mail with their assignment attached. (The first thing you would do, of course, is to make sure the paper is indeed attached. Sometimes, we all forget to attach an attachment.)

If the read receipt is required, students cannot later claim that they turned something in when in fact they did not. You can ask them to show their read receipt. If they don't have it, they didn't turn in the paper.

Finally, if you do not allow electronic submission, make that clear to the students in the syllabus, and clarify how work WILL be turned in, and how it will be confirmed to the student that it was received.

9. Liars and Cheats: Academic Honesty

How big a problem is it? Here's this, ripped effortlessly from the internet:

Electronic Journal of Sociology (2003)

ISSN: 1198 3655

**Collegiate Academic Dishonesty Revisited:
What Have They Done,
How Often Have They Done It,
Who Does It, And
Why Did They Do It?**

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The number of students who admit cheating (i.e., prevalence) has received considerable attention in the literature. In a survey of marketing students, it was found that 49% admitted to some form of cheating (Tom & Borin, 1988). In an anonymous survey of students at a major university, over two-thirds reported cheating at least once (Hollinger & Lanza-Kaduce, 1996). In a survey sent to more than 15,000 students at 31 major universities, it was found that over 60% admitted cheating at least once (Meade, 1992). Most studies estimated that 50% to 65% of college students engage in some form of academic dishonesty (Davis et al., 1992; Gardner, Roper, Gonzalez, & Simpson, 1988; Haines, Kiefhoff,

LaBeff, & Clark, 1986; Jendrek, 1992; LaBeff, Clark, Haines, & Diekhoff, 1990; McCabe, 1992). Still other studies have found a higher rate (i.e., 70% or more) of students admitting they have engaged in some form of academic dishonesty (e.g., Eskridge & Ames, 1993; Genereux & McLeod, 1995; McCabe and Bowers, 1994). In a meta-analysis, the mean prevalence of cheating was 70% (Whitley, 1998).

Clearly, students are doing it. Before we discuss what we do when they do, it's important to remember that cheating can be prevented.

Here are some steps you can take:

Send the message from the first day of class that you are aware of cheating, that you care about cheating, and that you are not reluctant to pursue punishment for cheaters. Simply taking a moment to say this may dissuade students who might be tempted to cheat, thinking you don't care or aren't vigilant.

Have a statement on cheating in your syllabus.

Emphasize the connection between time management and academic honesty. The three Ps are procrastination, panic, and plagiarism (or cheating on an exam) and they go together.

For exams, remove access to all outside forms of information. The classic crib note up the sleeve has become, in today's environment of digital technology, a whole host of devices that must be proscribed during an exam: cell phones that serve as calculators and provide access to the internet, iPods that have information downloaded onto them, even digital means of printing crib notes onto Coke bottle labels!

Ask students to remove all electronic devices, along with books, notes, hats (baseball cap bills make for great note surfaces), coats, bulky sweaters, etc. Even slip-on shoes are suspect, as notes can be taped to the inside. Formulas can be written on the edges of fingers.

Never use the same exam twice.

Keep all exams in locked drawers in your office or at home when not on your person.

Review with your department secretary how exams will be copied, and by whom, and where they will be stored until you pick them up.

Make more than one version of your exam, and pass out both to alternate seats.

Number exams and make certain all return to you at the end of the exam session.

Craft assignments that are difficult to purchase or pull from a file: a local element or an unusual twist will make it difficult to find a paper to fit the assignment.

Assign at least one outline or draft of the paper for your review. Building process into your paper assignments will not only yield better papers, but makes plagiarism impossible.

Ignorance is no excuse. All first year students at Assumption attend a session on Academic Honesty as part of the fall orientation, and all receive at that time a copy of the full policy.

All our ENG130 courses teach proper use of sources, and all students are required to take that class. Our reference librarians are diligent in their attention to this issue, and they work with many, many students. We send out a Deanmail called, "Sure, Plagiarism is Wrong. But Why?" to all first years early in the fall semester.

What counts as a violation of academic honesty at Assumption?

- 1. Plagiarism.** Claiming as one's own anything from a whole paper to more than three words that were written by someone else. Intent to deceive does not have to be proved, nor is ignorance an excuse. The range of egregiousness runs from pulling something, *in toto*, off the internet or out of a roommate's file, to insufficient paraphrase. All are infractions. For a full description of acceptable citational practices, see *Assumption College Student Academic Honesty Policy*.
- 2. Cheating.** Looking at another student's paper during an exam, bringing in cheat sheets, obtaining a copy of the exam from another student, or from the trash in a department office prior to the exam.
- 3. Abuse of academic materials.** Damaging or destroying academic materials owned by AC or by another student.
- 4. Fabrication and falsification.** Alteration or invention of information or citations in an assignment. Rigging or inventing data. Forging signatures on college documents.
- 5. Multiple submission.** Though we encourage students to make connections between classes, turning in the same work in two classes is not allowed. The standard rules of plagiarism apply.
- 6. Complicity in academic dishonesty.** Knowingly allowing another student to copy or use one's work in any form.

If you discover any of the above, and if you have evidence, call the Dean at x7487, to determine if it is a first offense. If it is:

Fill out a **settlement form** (see below) indicating what infraction you think has taken place, what evidence you have, and what penalty will be imposed if the student signs it, thus admitting guilt. Settlement forms are available in department offices, and in the Dean's Office, 026 Alumni Hall.

SETTLEMENT OF A CHARGE OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

To the Student:

1. You are **not** required to sign this form.
2. You have a right to a hearing before the Academic Policy Board before any disciplinary penalty may be imposed for the offense charged.
3. You have 72 hours to seek advice and to decide whether to sign. You may discuss your decision with any person you choose.
4. If you sign, only the stated penalty will be imposed, and this form will be kept on record in the Dean's Office for five (5) years. It may be used against you if you are charged again with an academic honesty offense. This settlement form is not disclosed to prospective employers or to other schools to which you may apply.

To the Instructor:

I charge the student listed below with a violation of the *Assumption College Student Academic Honesty Policy*.

Student's Name _____
Student ID# _____
Course _____
Semester _____ Year _____

Description of Violation: *use additional sheets as needed.*

If the student admits guilt by signing this form, I will apply *only* the following penalty:

Instructor's signature _____
Date _____
Time _____

I have read this settlement form carefully and understand its significance. I admit to committing the offense charged by the Instructor, accept the penalty assigned, and understand that this agreement will be kept on file in the Dean of Undergraduate Studies office for five years.

Student's Signature: _____
Date _____ **Time** _____

Schedule a meeting with the student to present the evidence and to hear their explanation. Some faculty prefer filling the form out with the student, rather than having it prepared ahead of time. It is possible a student may be able to provide a satisfactory explanation, and by not having a pre-filled form, professors convey their willingness to be fair, and to objectively consider

the student's explanation. Either way, this is the teachable moment. This is your chance to make it clear that academic honesty is taken seriously at AC, and just what constitutes it.

The student has 72 hours to take counsel and decide to sign or decline to sign the form. If the student signs, have him or her do so in your presence. Then, a copy of the form and evidence goes to the Dean's office, and the penalty stipulated on the form is imposed by you.

No other action is taken and no one else is informed of the offense. There is no indication of the incident on the student's transcript. All records in the Dean's office are destroyed after five years.

If the student declines to sign the form, the professor may choose to drop the matter, or to pursue it through the Dean's office. In cases where the student and professor cannot reach an agreement, all cases of academic honesty are brought before a hearing panel of the Academic Policy Board for review of the evidence and for a decision to be made.

Penalties typically range from a first year student's first offense being punished by having to rewrite the assignment for no credit, to an upper-class student with a second offense failing the course. Faculty may not impose any penalty beyond failure of the course.

In the instance of a second or subsequent offense, the Dean will take the next steps: assembling a subcommittee of the Academic Policy Board (plus an objective, responsible student leader) to carry out a hearing. Second and subsequent convictions of academic dishonesty are punishable by failure of the course, and/or suspension or expulsion, or other penalties as determined by the hearing.

Finally, if you suspect academic dishonesty at the end of the semester, we recommend an Incomplete be assigned, so there is time to complete the settlement process.

10. When the Parent Calls YOU

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) stipulates that a student's academic information belongs to the student, a legal adult. This means we don't share any academic information with anyone without the written permission of the student.

The Dean of Undergraduate Studies sends a release form to all First Year Students prior to their arrival, and we keep records. If a parent calls you, refer the call to us. We will confirm approval to speak to the parent or other person, and then either we will make the call, based on information you have given us, or, if you prefer, you may return the call yourself.

11. Turning in Grades

The deadline for turning in grades is posted on the Academic Calendar, which is one of the many useful things on the Registrar's webpage. (Go to the AC homepage, click on "Academics" then on "Registrar".) It's also printed in the back of each year's academic catalog. The registrar's office will inform you when the online grade submission portal is open. Grades may also be submitted on paper and in person to the registrar's office.

Incompletes

The registrar cannot record incompletes without the approval of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, so please work with the Dean if you want to assign an incomplete. Conversely, if the Dean hears of a student's serious illness or life crisis at the end of the semester, she may contact you to request that a student be granted an incomplete.

Incompletes turn to Fs six weeks into the following semester, so if you have an incomplete outstanding, be sure to finish it up with the student as soon as possible.

If you suspect plagiarism or cheating at the eleventh hour of the semester, work with the Dean to assign an incomplete. This gives you and the student time to go through the Settlement Process. In simple fairness, we do not administer any penalty for infringement of academic honesty without going through the settlement process.

Notice of Low Final Grade

When you turn in your final grades, we ask that you tell us something about those at C- and below. This helps the Academic Policy Board, which meets at the end of every semester, to make informed decisions about the best status to assign students whose semester GPAs have dropped below 2.0.

The categories of status are: **Probation** (warning and check-ins with the Dean); **Conditional Enrollment** (last chance before expulsion, but also weekly free tutoring and fortnightly check-ins with the Dean); **Required Withdrawal** (expulsion).

Notice of Low Final Grade forms are available in the department offices, the registrar's office, and the Dean's office. We will also distribute an e-mail version for your convenience.

12. Special for First Years: Mid-Semester Grade-to-Date Reports

The transition from high school to college academics can be tough, and one of the most difficult, because deceptive, changes can be how many points of assessment a course offers. High school students, especially in today's No Child Left Behind environment, have become accustomed to frequent quizzes and exams. But at AC, a student may

not receive any response to his or her work for weeks. Students with weak skills may blithely coast along, unaware of their peril, until it is, in fact, too late.

For this reason, we ask that all faculty teaching first year students turn in a Mid-Semester Grade-to-Date Report, which you will receive from the registrar. A mid-term report is meant to awaken first year students to their situation, and either to confirm their effective study habits, or to alert them to the need to change them in the back half of the semester. We know this is more work for you, but the first years benefit enormously.

13. But I Thought I Had an A! Requests for Change of Grade

We believe the best and fairest moment for a professor to grade work is within the context of the semester in which it was done. For this reason, the grade you give at the end of term is, in our view, the grade that should remain. Giving students frequent and clear updates on their status in your class will prevent end-of-semester surprises, and with them, requests for changes of grade. However, there are times when a student may feel she or he deserved a different (somehow always better) grade, and he or she may appeal to you.

If the student can demonstrate a mathematical error on your part in calculating the grade, or can prove that work you did not grade was indeed turned in prior to the deadline, or that some other accident or error has occurred, then you may wish to change a grade. In these instances, we would approve the change. This would have to happen prior to the deadline for Change of Grade, which is six weeks into the following semester. After that, no grades are changed for any reason whatsoever.

If the student's appeal to you is based on your being "unfair," or your "grading too hard," or "giving higher grades to others in the class," or on an urgent need on the student's part to re-establish

NCAA eligibility, or on any of a host of other bases, you may tell them that the Dean will not approve such a request even should you submit it. We approve no grade changes based on work turned in after the end of the semester, or on a re-evaluation of already-graded work. The professor's first judgment, made within the context of the semester, and alongside all other work turned in for the assignment, is -- barring error or accident -- best and fairest.

14. Putting Materials on Reserve

The D'Alzon Library can put your syllabi, readings, assignments, study guides, etc., on reserve two ways: in hard copy, or on e-Reserves. For hard copy, bring your photocopies (they do not provide photocopying services) and/or submit a list of the library materials you require to Janice Wilbur at the Circulation Desk, and she will take care of the rest. Or, for even more convenience for your students, put your materials on e-Reserve, which puts course materials on the Web so they are available to their students 24/7 to view, download, and print.

When submitting your e-Reserve materials to the library, tell them if you want them placed on your Blackboard course site or made available via the library's online catalog. Assumption students can access these materials from any computer on campus or off.

E-Reserves remain posted until the end of the semester. If you would like to use e-Reserves materials more than once, you must notify the library at least two months in advance so copyright permission can be obtained.

Questions? Call Janice Wilbur (x7271) or go to the library URL: <http://www.assumption.edu/dept/library/resources/handbook06.pdf>

15.A Few Helpful Resources

Notes

Here are a few places to turn for good advice on teaching.

Lang, Jim. *On Course: A Week by Week Guide to Your First Semester of College Teaching*. (Harvard UP 2008). A great first-semester introduction, by our own Jim Lang, who also penned *Life on the Tenure Track*. Even more useful for new folks here, as the anecdotes depict our own students.

McKeachie, Wilbert, and Marilla Svinicki. *McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, and Theory for College and University Teachers*, 12th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006. A classic guide, handed to generations of Teaching Assistants, with good effect.

The Chronicle of Higher Education. Available in the library, if you don't maintain your own subscription.

College Teaching, the journal.

Your experienced colleagues. Do not hesitate to ask their advice, and to collaborate on specific concerns. Ours is a teaching community, and teacher talk here is one of the best resources you can have.